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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/14/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [AEMR](#) [MARR](#) [CASC](#) [KHLS](#) [LE](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: (C) TFLE01: SEEKING INFORMAL APPROVAL TO USE UK
BASES IN CYPRUS FOR LEBANON EVAC

REF: STATE 115501

Classified By: Acting PolCouns Richard Bell for reasons 1.4 (b,d,& g)

¶1. (C) Embassy London discussed with FCO Cyprus Desk Officer Simon Wood on July 14 the possibility of the U.S. using British Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) on Cyprus as staging areas for fixed and rotary aircraft to help evacuate AmCits from Lebanon. Wood told us that ultimately the decision rested with the British MOD, but at the FCO's working level, there were no objections. Wood also advised that when we are prepared to make a formal request, it would have to be done through MOD channels. He also stressed the importance of coordinating with Cyprus on any evacuation plans, suggested we should get permission from Cyprus to use its airspace and territorial waters even though the BSAs were sovereign territory, and opined that we would find the Cypriots rather helpful given the level of assistance Cyprus was providing to EU states also trying to evacuate their citizens.

¶2. (C) DAO has raised our informal request with the Chief of Defense Staff's (CDS) office. The CDS's office told DAO that the MOD reviewed their own evacuation plans for the region a couple of weeks ago and as a result, believe their own plans are well prepared. DAO understood that the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), responsible for MOD operations, was currently working on the UK's own evacuation plans, and that a MOD working group in Strategic Plans was reviewing the capacity of the SBA's support infrastructure. The CDS's office did raise the concern that there were also approximately 15,000 British nationals in the region that might need to be evacuated elevating British concerns about the capacity of British SBAs in Cyprus to accommodate Amcit evacuees, what services Amcits could be provided, and how long they would stay.

¶3. (C) The CDS's office informed DAO that they are considering our informal request and would respond tomorrow July 15 at approximately 1100 hrs (GMT). DAO passed their weekend contact details and we will report in septel as soon as we have more information.

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